



mkhdu3a.org.uk

NEWSLETTER

No. 81 MARCH 2020

Dear U3A member,
Welcome to our March newsletter,

As we write this it is snowing fiercely, green buds are everywhere, and we look forward longingly to the spring. A good time to tell you that our National U3A Day is on 3rd June, when we plan to be celebrating our organisation on what will hopefully be a sunny day somewhere on our patch. The details are not yet firmed up, but we think it is safe to tell you that music will probably be involved!

The purpose of the day is to promote a positive image of life after retirement, have fun celebrating U3A and attract new members. If you or your interest groups have any ideas for contributing to the event, please let us know. All help is welcomed!

Also, do have a look at the information about our exciting speaker for the May AGM, [page 7](#)

If there's anything you feel we need to know please get in touch with the relevant person in the contacts list or generally on:

enquiries@mkhdu3a.org.uk

Best wishes from Sara and Anne, Co-chairs.

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March Monthly Meeting

British Girlguiding Overseas

British Girlguiding Overseas (BGO) is part of the UK Girlguiding Association. It enables girls and young women whose parents work abroad, or are with the Armed Forces, to continue enjoying their guiding wherever they are posted and where language or culture makes it impossible or inappropriate to join the local national organisation. Being a member of BGO ensures that on their return to the UK they have missed none of the adventure programme or fun of being a UK Guide!

About Our Speaker, Lesley Knighton

As Chief Commissioner for BGO, Lesley Knighton MBE, DL, had the privilege of visiting, training and supporting Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers and leaders across the world during her six year appointment, and is looking forward to sharing her passion for BGO.

Forthcoming Members' Meetings

Date	Time	Venue	Topic	Speaker
Tuesday March 10th	2.00	All Saints Centre	British Girl Guiding overseas	Lesley Knighton
Tuesday April 14th	2.00	All Saints Centre	Six thousand lost children	Val Hart
Tuesday May 12th	1.05	All Saints Centre	AGM Talk - Migrants and the making of modern Birmingham	Jon Bloomfield
Tuesday June 9th	2.00	All Saints Centre	Martineau Gardens	Gill Milburn
Tuesday July 14th	2.00	All Saints Centre	Kings Heath Park Garden	Mike Hinton
Tuesday August 11th	2.00	All Saints Church	The history and ethos of BVT and Selly Manor.	Gillian Ellis Heritage manager BVT
Tuesday September 8th	2.00	All Saints Centre	Georgian town to Victorian city	Stephen Hartland

If members have any suggestions for future speakers, please contact Sylvia Butler at a monthly meeting.

Social Programme

Social Activities from March 2020

This is a summary of events in the coming months that are already planned. New arrangements are made frequently. If you wish to be kept updated on any activities please contact the relevant group leader, (see the foot of this section).

Drop In Coffee Morning at Kings Heath Park, Victorian Tea Rooms

The [March 2020](#) coffee morning will be on Friday, 13th of March.

The coffee morning is between 10.30 and 12.00. On arrival pay £2.50 at the café's counter and you can then drink unlimited tea or coffee which will be available for U3A members in the Conservatory. You can also purchase a lovely piece of cake in the café to go with your drink. The Conservatory will be reserved just for our U3A members. Parking is available and the venue is fully accessible.

These drop-in coffee mornings are open to all MKHD U3A members to enable new and existing members to meet more informally. If you are aware of any member who does not have access to the internet and may be interested in these coffee mornings, please let them know.

PLEASE NOTE:- There will be no coffee morning in April as it falls on Good Friday and the café is closed.

Any questions please contact Tessa or Val.

Lunches

At present all places are taken for our next outing, but there is a waiting list to which your name would be added if you want to come. This lunch is on [23 April, 12.30 pm at The Brasserie at the College of Food](#) and it is a 3-course meal and coffee at a cost of £17.50 each plus drinks and service. The meals choices have to be pre-booked from a choice of 5 starters, 4 mains and 4 desserts. Those going will be asked to make their choices around mid-March.

If you want your name added to the waiting list or if you would like to see the menu please contact Carey, details below.

No further bookings have been made as yet, but it is expected that another lunch will be arranged in June: to be notified of this you can join the mailing list by e-mailing Carey or watch out for updates in the newsletter.

Concerts

No more concerts are planned for this season: ones after September will be looked at when the programme comes out in the early Summer. If you want to be notified of concerts you can join the mailing list by emailing Carey or keep an eye out for updates in the newsletter.

Theatre

If you would like to join the theatre group or would like to know more, please contact Julie. Joining the theatre group puts you under no obligation to join any or all theatre trips but ensures you are notified of forthcoming trips. Information about theatre trips is also included in each newsletter, however members of the theatre group receive updates by email or phone, if they do not have email.

Cinema

Due to time constraints, if you want to be kept updated about arrangements for future cinema trips, please contact Roy who will add your name to the cinema group list, and he will notify you directly of planned film trips. Joining the cinema group puts you under no obligation to join any or all cinema trips but ensures you are notified of forthcoming trips.

Quiz Night

The U3A quiz returns on **Wednesday 13 May 2020** – it will again be at the **All Services Club, Church Road, Moseley** starting promptly at 7.00 pm (we'd expect to finish by 9.30 at the latest). The All Services Club serves alcoholic, non-alcoholic and hot drinks. You can take your own nibbles to eat.

Team sizes will be strictly limited to 6 people: the entry fee is again £2.00 per person.

It helps to know in advance how many will be coming – so if you want to come please let us know. You don't have to be part of a team from the outset - we have made up teams from people who have come in ones and twos before and some teams have spaces. In fact, it can make for an even better evening to meet different people.

This quiz is being organised by a group of volunteers. So do put this date in your diary and please let **Sylvia Butler** know if you plan to come along (see below for contact details)

If you enjoy quizzes and would like to organise or help organise a future quiz, please let Julie know. You would be under no obligation to organise more than one quiz, but you may find you really enjoy doing it.

Coach trips

If you would like to organise or help organise a coach trip for MKHD U3A members, please contact Julie.

Important Notice

It is stated in the MKHD Social Account Policy that 'Members who book a place for a social event/trip are responsible for full payment, regardless of attendance, and no further bookings for a member can be made until any outstanding payments are made'.

Contact Details

Carey:	careybaff@live.co.uk	0121 472 6535
Julie:	julieallder@yahoo.co.uk	Mobile 07506 720 756
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Val:	envybaxter@hotmail.com	0121 444 7214
Sylvia:	sylviabutler1945@gmail.com	Mobile 07716806921

Membership Renewals

- All memberships of MKHD U3A are due for renewal from 1st April. The fee for the coming year is £15.
- It will be possible for you to renew from the 1st March for those of you wishing to renew online. To do this go to our website www.mkhdu3a.org.uk, click on the **Join** or **Renew** button, then click on **Members' Portal**, where you will be asked to enter your membership number, first and last name, postcode and email address. Although payment is made via PayPal, you do not need to have a PayPal account but can use either your debit or credit card. This option gives you the possibility of printing your own membership card or you can simply collect it from a monthly meeting. Most of our recent new members have joined this way and find it quite straightforward – and it saves your membership renewal volunteers a lot of time!
- If you wish to pay in person at the March or April meetings the hall will be open to you from 1.10 pm. You will not need to complete a fresh Membership form but, if you wish to pay by cheque, it will help if you complete it in advance - £15 payable to **U3A MKHD** and signed - **before** coming to the table to collect your new card. Also, if any of your contact details have changed, be sure to tell us. Cash is acceptable although cheques are preferred.
- If you prefer to renew by post, send your cheque (not cash) for £15 together with a note of your membership number, if known, and an s.a.e. if you wish your new card to be posted to you, to: **Jackie Spearpoint, 14 Awdry Court, St Nicolas Gardens, Birmingham B38 8BH**. Alternatively your new card can be collected at any monthly meeting.
- Whichever method you choose, please be sure to let us know about any changes to your contact details. Finally, if you no longer wish to be a member it is very helpful if you let us know.

Any questions or changes please contact Jackie Spearpoint by email:

jackiespearpoint@gmail.com or telephone 0121 439 5824

Jackie Spearpoint, Membership Secretary

Cryptic clue solving

Last month's answers

It goes round in circles just before twelve. (3,6,6). The number eleven

His day is on the cards when evil tenants get drunk. (2,9). St Valentine anag. evil tenants

This month's clues

You may be as mad as this with someone at the tea party. (1,5,4).

Beware first of March... first to decay? (8).

Interest Group of the month

French Improvers Conversation Group



We set up our group in February 2019, meeting initially at the cafe in Kings Heath Park, to gauge interest and determine aims and objectives. We started meeting fortnightly in May. The level was pitched at members with rusty O level French. The idea was to give participants the encouragement and confidence to “have a go” and start conversing.

We were lucky to find 3 wonderful retired French teachers who joined the group and facilitate it helping to give the sessions structure. They come up with interesting challenges from “speed dating” in pairs to acting out scenarios in the doctor’s surgery, with a bit of grammar thrown in. Participants have a small amount of preparation for each session, but much of the conversation is unprepared. The atmosphere is informal and relaxed and, if we get stumped, we have been known to throw in a bit of “Franglais”!

The meetings are self-funding as they take place in the group leader’s kitchen, a cosy place to meet. Conversationalists are given refreshments including home baked sweet treats made by the host’s husband, who has become fondly known as “the baker”.

We are a mixed level group, but we help and encourage one another and try to ensure that no one feels overwhelmed or intimidated. Everyone has made good progress. We’ve all come a long way, but we know we have more challenges ahead and look forward to them.

Our group is indicative of the wonderful way in which U3A helps to bring people from different walks of life together to learn in an atmosphere of friendship, mutual support and much laughter.

Sadly our group is unable to welcome new members at present because of limited capacity. However, you too can do what the group leader did and initiate a new group. The Interest Group Co-ordinators are there to help support you to do so. Contact [Brenda Bingham](#) or [Roy Stove](#) if you would like more information on how to set up a new group.

Interest group notices

Group Leaders’ meeting

We were pleased that over half our 67 interest groups were represented at this meeting. Leaders initially had a chance to chat over a lighthearted questionnaire about the U3A. Some of our committee members were present and provided useful information, including Anne updating us on social prescribing and related issues. Several leaders spoke enthusiastically about their groups, demonstrating the range of different groups we offer. After responses to the questionnaire, we enjoyed a buffet lunch before dispersing.

We hold this annual event to help us to keep in touch with group leaders and to thank them for their contribution to our U3A. We are always very happy to hear from any members who have suggestions for and would like advice on setting up a new group.

Brenda and Roy Interest Group Coordinators

Our AGM in May

We now have the schedule for our AGM on **Tuesday May 12th**. As usual, we will begin early with tea, coffee and cake. This will be followed by the business of the AGM – we will report back to members on the year’s work, on our finances, and will elect a new committee. Then we will have a nationally known speaker, Jon Bloomfield, and he will sign books for members who wish to buy one.

Schedule on Tuesday May 12:

- 1.05 – 1.35 refreshments
- 1.40 – 2.10 AGM
- 2.15 – 3.15 (approx.) talk by Jon Bloomfield and questions
- 3.30 – 4.00 (approx.) book signing

Our AGM Speaker, Jon Bloomfield

Our City, Migrants and the Making of Modern Birmingham

We are very excited to be able to inform you of our AGM speaker, Jon Bloomfield. Jon is both a nationally-known personality and a local Kings Heath resident.

Jon is a historian and urban policy specialist. He covered the 1989 Velvet Revolution for 'The Guardian.'

He has lived and worked in Birmingham for more than 40 years. Currently, he is an advisor to Europe’s largest climate change programme – Climate KIC - and an honorary research fellow at the University of Birmingham.

Jon’s talk will be based on the research done for his book, *Our City: Migrants and the Making of Modern Birmingham*. He will explore how one of Britain’s major cities has been transformed for the better by its migrant population. Based on original interviews, his book tells the story of fifty migrants to Birmingham from all walks of life: first and second generation; men and women; from thirteen different countries from Ireland to India, Pakistan to Poland, the Caribbean to Somalia.

In twelve chapters, the book shows the variety of migrant experience, from their working lives, to education, religion and relationships. In Jon’s interviews they talked frankly, openly and with humour about their experiences both at work and in society more generally. Their insights and anecdotes will shape and flavour Jon’s talk.



New Committee Needed!

Each year we elect a new committee and it is not only encouraged, but is vital that we see new faces on the Committee so that we can refresh and rejuvenate our committee and our ideas.

This year three committee members are standing down:

- Brenda Bingham has served on the committee as an Interest Group Co-ordinator for the past three years.
- Julie Alder has served for the past three years as Interest Group Co-ordinator and then Social Secretary.
- Mike Clark is a founding member of the committee and has served for seven and a half years – the last survivor of the original committee!

As is the case every year we seek nominations for all of the Committee posts and in particular are looking for members willing to replace those standing down as Interest Group Coordinator and Social Secretary. The following are planned as the Committee posts for the coming year:

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Business and Communications Secretary
- Treasurer
- Membership Secretary
- Interest Group Coordinator (3 posts)
- Social Secretary
- Monthly Meeting Co-ordinator

(Please note that although we currently have two joint Chairs we are willing to accept nominations for Chair and Vice Chair as an alternative).

Role descriptions for all of these are on our website in the Documents section. Present members of the Committee (see end of newsletter) will also advise you on how to find out more about the roles.

If you are interested in standing for any of the posts please email or phone Sara or Anne, our current Chairs (contact details at end of newsletter), or talk to them at a monthly meeting. You will need to provide them with (in writing): your name and membership number and the name of a proposer and seconder (for both of them we will also need their name and membership number). The proposer and seconder cannot be current members of the Committee.

Resolutions:

If you wish to propose a resolution to be discussed at the AGM, please give this to Sara or Anne either in writing or by email, including your name and membership number and the name and membership number of a seconder.

The deadline for nominations and resolutions is the end of the month, Tuesday March 31.

Coronavirus

We have received the following updated advice from Healthwatch - the NHS consumer watchdog. Please note that such advice may be updated regularly; so be sure to watch the latest news programmes.

What's the risk of catching coronavirus in the UK?

The NHS and Public Health England are well prepared for outbreaks of new infectious diseases. The NHS has put in place measures to ensure the safety of all patients and NHS staff while also ensuring services are available to the public as normal.

The UK Chief Medical Officers have raised the risk to the public from low to moderate. But the risk to individuals remains low. If you have arrived back to the UK from mainland China and other specified areas, follow the advice for [returning travellers](#).

How is coronavirus spread?

Like the common cold, coronavirus (also known as Covid-19) infection usually occurs through close contact with a person with novel coronavirus via cough and sneezes or hand contact. You can also be infected by touching contaminated surfaces if you do not wash your hands.

The risk of being in close contact with a person with coronavirus or contaminated surfaces is very low at the moment, as members of the public who have visited Wuhan, Hubei province, China are currently in isolation.

Symptoms of coronavirus

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a cough
- A high temperature
- Shortness of breath

When to call 111

Based on the scientific advice of the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) the UK Chief Medical Officers are advising anyone who has travelled to the UK from mainland China, Thailand, Japan, Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia or Macau in the last 14 days and is experiencing cough or fever or shortness of breath, to stay indoors and call NHS 111, even if symptoms are mild.

Do not go to a GP surgery or hospital. Call 111, stay indoors and avoid close contact with other people. Please note that in some parts of Wales you may have to call NHS Direct Wales 0845 46 47

How to avoid catching or spreading germs?

Do

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze.
- Put used tissues in the bin straight away.
- Wash your hands with soap and water often – use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell.

Don't

- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.

For further information

Go to the government web site:

www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus

Contact information

Interest Group enquiries - please contact one of the Interest Group Coordinators:

- Brenda Bingham 0121 444 6295 brbingham@hotmail.com
- Roy Stove 0121 459 8604 jroystove@googlemail.com

Membership enquiries - please contact:

- Jackie Spearpoint 0121 439 5824 membership@mkhdu3a.org.uk

Social events enquiries - please contact:

- Julie Allder 07506 720 756 julieallder@yahoo.co.uk

Newsletter

- Ken Fisher ken@ken-fisher.com

General enquires - please contact:

- Sara Meyer sarameyer@hotmail.co.uk
- Anne Crerar 07881 702 305
- Mike Clark 0121 689 2765
- Or email enquiries@mkhdu3a.org.uk

Your Committee

- Co-chair Anne Crerar
- Co-chair Sara Meyer
- Business & Communications Secretary Ken Fisher
- Treasurer Tessa Bidgood
- Social Secretary Julie Allder
- Interest Group Co-ordinators Brenda Bingham and Roy Stove
- Membership Secretary Jackie Spearpoint
- Monthly Meeting Co-ordinator Sylvia Butler
- Advisory Member Mike Clark